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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2003

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEALS

The True Face of the EU - Milliyet
Banking Supervisory Board President Resigns - Milliyet
Erdogan Declines Sharon's Visit - Milliyet
Gul Finds EU Report 'Objective' - Sabah
Erdogan to Berlusconi: "Do not demoralize Turkey" - Sabah
EU Report: Cyprus not a Pre-condition, but still an Obstacle
- Hurriyet

OPINION MAKERS

EU Insists on Cyprus - Cumhuriyet
PKK/KADEK Operation in Bingol - Cumhuriyet
Ankara Did Not Want Sharon - Cumhuriyet
Gul: Cyprus is not A Political Criteria - Radikal
EU Says Turkey Failed to Implement the Reforms - Yeni Safak
Tevfik Bilgin Replaces Akcakoca as Bank Supervisory Board
President-Zaman

BRIEFING

EU Progress Report: All papers give extensive coverage to the controversial report about Turkey released yesterday by the European Union. "Hurriyet" says that despite all the pressure from Ankara to avoid the linkage between the Cyprus issue and Turkey's EU accession, the EU commission included Cyprus as a condition in the report. Page 16 of the Strategy document says that Cyprus is not a pre-condition for Turkey's EU Accession talks to start. However, page 20 stresses that the absence of a solution to the Cyprus issue could be a significant obstacle to Turkey's EU accession. Most papers agree that the EU has explicitly linked the Cyprus issue to Turkey's accession for the first time. FM Gul criticized the linkage, saying that 'Cyprus is not part of the political criteria for EU accession.' "Cumhuriyet" criticizes the government for its weak reaction to the Cyprus condition. "Radikal" praises the government for its restrained response, calling it a 'demonstration of common sense.' EU expansion chief Verheugen said that the EU wanted to 'send a message' to Turkey about the urgency of the issue. 'This is not a pre-condition,' Verheugen noted, 'but we have noted a reality.'

Turkey Rejects Sharon's Visit Request: "Hurriyet" reports that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon requested to meet with PM Erdogan last Monday on his return home from Moscow. Ankara declined the request due to Erdogan's 'heavy schedule' and informed Israel that such a visit would be welcomed in the future. Several others speculate that the reason for Erdogan's decision had more to do with politics than scheduling problems.

US Spokesman Comments on Logoglu Statements : "Milliyet" and "Radikal" report the US response to Turkish Ambassador Faruk Logoglu's statement regarding the PKK/KADEK and his assertion that the US is favoring the Kurds in Iraq. State Department Spokesman Adam Ereli clarified that 'the US does not favor the Kurds.' He added that the United States is taking 'all necessary steps' to restrict PKK/KADEK activities in Iraq. "Milliyet" adds that the US was alarmed by Ambassador Logoglu's statement that Turkey will not send

peacekeeping troops to Iraq without an Iraqi invitation.

Banking Supervisory Board (BDDK) Chairman Resigns: BDDK Chairman Engin Akcakoca ended weeks of speculation by resigning from his post yesterday. "Yeni Safak" claims that Akcakoca resigned to avoid facing a government inspection of the handling of the Imar Bank case. "Cumhuriyet" contends that Akcakoca was essentially forced out by government pressure. State Minister Abdulatif Sener proposed that Akcakoca be replaced by Tevfik Bilgin, currently the General Manager of Halkbank.

EDITORIAL OPINION

"The EU's Message"

Sami Kohen opined in the mass appeal Milliyet (11/6): "It is not difficult to predict that the Greek Cypriots and Greece will block membership negotiations between Turkey and the EU if no progress is made on Cyprus. The EU's Progress Report on Turkey says that other EU member countries might join such a veto. . In this case, Turkey will have to decide whether to declare the Cyprus condition in the document as unacceptable and enter into a confrontation with the EU or continue its dialogue with the Europeans. It is a decision to be adopted in line with Ankara's political preferences. It would be better to give a start to the solution process now rather than leaving all attempts to the last minute. The Progress Report indicates that compared with the past, the EU is now more favorably disposed toward Turkey. There is no sense in disrupting that positive mood by objecting to a particular clause on the Cyprus issue."

"The fight has started"

Soli Ozel noted in the mass appeal Sabah (11/6): "Domestic policy conditions indicate that the AK Party government will not be able to press for a solution on Cyprus without receiving a guarantee from the EU for negotiations starting in December 2004. Turkey must not break its ties with the EU between the May 2004 EU expansion and the EU summit meeting in December 2004, at which a decision on Turkey will be adopted. . Some believe that, given Turkey's rising strategic significance, the EU will not be able to abandon Turkey just for the sake of Cyprus. However, the progress report says that once it becomes an EU member, Cyprus will have a veto right. . Turkey must return to the negotiating table and produce creative ideas for a solution. A diplomacy based merely on postponing, gaining time, and threatening cannot be taken seriously."

EDELMAN